Private investment in coal sector

769. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA : Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) the policy regarding private investment in the coal sector;

(b) what has been the response of the private sector; and

(c) the details of steps taken by Government for mining of underground mines with the assistance of private sector ?

THE MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES (SUSHREE UMA BHARTI) : (a) to (c). Private sector companies are allowed to undertake investment in mining of coal for their captive use in power generation, production of iron & steel, production of cement, and such other end uses that the Central Government may by notification specify. This policy applies to both underground mines as well as open cast mines. As on date 27 blocks stand allotted for captive mining to various companies with most of them from the private sector.

Illegal coal mining

770. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA : Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have found large scale illegal coal mining in the command areas of the Central Coalfields Limited;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Coal Mines Nationalisation Act would be amended suitably to curb such illegal practices;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the officials of CCI have been involved in such illegal mining; and

(f) if so, action Government propose to take in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES (SUSHREE UMA BHARTI) : (a) and (b) Illegal mining activities in the nature of surreptitious extraction and pilferage of coal from abandoned, closed and dis-used mines and also from outcrop regions have been reported from Central Coalfields Ltd. Since illegal mining activities are carried out stealthily and clandestinely, it is not possible to know the exact details. However, some details regarding the illegal mining cases detected in CCL as a result of surprise checks/routine patrolling and reported to local State Police Authority in the form of FIRs during the last three years are

given below :—

Company	State	Details	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
CCL	Jharkhand/ Bihar	FIR	25	15	61
		No. of arrests	12	1	7
		Coal recovery (Tonne)	524	677	437.3
		Approx. value (Rs. Lakhs)	5.24	6.8	4.37

(c) and (d) Illegal mining is a term commonly used for mining without a valid prospecting licence or mining lease. The Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act. 1973, Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and various other Acts are sufficient to deal with the illegal mining. Section 30 of the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 provides imprisonment upto 3 years for offences including illegal mining.

(e) There is no report of involvement of CCL employees in illegal mining.

(f) Does not arise in view of answer given in part (e) of this question.

Raising of Tiger Force by IAF

771. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA :

SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is true that the Indian Air Force is seriously thinking of raising a force with new inductions and selective upgrades to supplement its air detection system;

(b) if so, the details of such expansion;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Air Force is proposing to raise "Tiger Force" to guard airports and other expensive and important areas of the country; and

(d) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) There is a perspective plan for acquisition of a number of state-of-the art radar systems, both ground based and on airborne platforms to modernise the existing air surveillance systems.